UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-NINTH SESSION

Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
69th meeting
held on
Wednesday, 14 September 1995
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 69th MEETING

Chairman: Ms. PEÑA (Mexico)
(Vice-Chairman)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 132: ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY ASPECTS OF THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS (continued)

(b) RELOCATION OF BELARUS TO THE GROUP OF MEMBER STATES SET OUT IN PARAGRAPH 3 (c) OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 43/232 (continued)

COMPLETION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of the publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-794, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.5/49/SR.69
19 September 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

/...

95-81276 (E)

In the absence of Mr. Teirlinck (Belgium, Ms. Peña (Mexico), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 4.45 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 132: ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY ASPECTS OF THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS (continued)

(b) RELOCATION OF BELARUS TO THE GROUP OF MEMBER STATES SET OUT IN PARAGRAPH 3 (c) OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 43/232 (continued) (A/C.5/49/L.70)

1. The CHAIRMAN introduced draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.70, which had emerged from the informal consultations on A/C.5/49/L.70, which had emerged from the informal consultations on the sub-item.

2. Mr. SYCHOU (Belarus) called upon members to support the adoption of the draft resolution. His country would continue to support the comprehensive reform of the scale of assessments both for the regular budget and for peace-keeping operations on the basis of the principle of the capacity to pay. The neutral, ad hoc arrangement that was proposed would have no negative financial implications for the membership of the United Nations and would facilitate his country's efforts to fulfil its obligations in respect of the peace-keeping operations. The Government of Belarus intended to deal with the arrears in its contributions for peace-keeping operations on the basis of the principle of the capacity to pay; it was considering possible procedures and timetables for payments of those arrears and would keep the General Assembly informed of developments in the matter.

3. Mr. AMARI (Tunisia) commended Portugal for voluntarily moving from group C to group B and expressed his delegation's sympathies for the position of Belarus. In spite of its reservations concerning some provisions in the draft resolution his delegation would not oppose the adoption of the draft resolution in view of the special nature of the arrangement that was to be authorized.

4. Draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.70 was adopted.

5. Mr. SYCHOU (Belarus) expressed his delegation's gratitude to the Chairman for her efforts to resolve the difficult issues dealt with in the draft resolution, and especially to the delegation of Portugal, whose willingness to compromise had made possible the adoption of the draft resolution.

6. Mrs. ARAGON (Philippines), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, thanked the Chairman for coordinating the efforts to build a consensus in support of the draft resolution. The most urgent problem facing the Organization was the cash-flow crisis that had been caused by the failure of Member States to pay their assessed contributions in full and on time. The reference in the draft resolution to the High-level Open-ended Working Group on the Financial Situation of the United Nations would not in any way prejudge the discussions or conclusions of that group.

7. Mrs. EMERSON (Portugal) expressed satisfaction at the consensus reached on relocating Belarus from group B to group C. She reiterated her Government's support for the work of the High-level Open-ended Working Group on the Financial Situation of the United Nations, which, it hoped, would lead to decisions correcting the unfair situations of other Member States not affected by the draft resolution just adopted.

8. Mr. THURNE (United Kingdom) said that his delegation had not opposed the adoption of the draft resolution primarily because of its concern over the situation which Belarus had been in for some years. However, that concern also extended to other countries faced with similar problems, and his delegation therefore attached much importance to the achievement of the objectives of the High-level Open-ended Working Group on the Financial Situation of the United Nations, including the creation of an equitable scale of assessments that truly reflected the capacity to pay of the Member States. His delegation was able to agree to the draft resolution because it clearly specified that the High-level Open-ended Working Group would continue its work on relevant issues, and that the arrangement provided for in it was a special, ad hoc one. His delegation joined those commending Portugal for its generosity in voluntarily accepting reclassification to a higher level of assessment.

9. Mr. KUZNETSOV (Russian Federation) expressed his delegation's sincere gratitude to the Chairman for her efforts to resolve a complex matter, and commended the flexibility and constructive attitude demonstrated by Portugal and Belarus. The relocation of Belarus from group B to group C corrected one of the current system's more obvious and inequitable anomalies. However, solving the problem of Belarus did not remove other anomalies and clear injustices in the current system of apportionment of expenses for peace-keeping operations, and his delegation hoped that the High-level Open-ended Working Group on the Financial Situation of the United Nations would redouble its efforts in that regard.

10. Mr. GRANT (United States of America) joined other delegations in thanking the Chairman for her efforts to help the Committee resolve the problem of Belarus. His Government's objections to the original proposal had been accommodated by the clear indication in the draft resolution that the measure adopted was exceptional and that further consideration would be given to possible changes in the scale of assessments for peace-keeping operations. The reference to that process without any prejudgment of its outcome was crucial to his delegation's support for the draft resolution. The difficulties experienced by the Committee in reaching agreement on the issue clearly reflected the problems inherent in the current scale of assessments: it was inflexible; it had an illogical, "all-or-nothing" system of discounts; it lacked clear criteria for assigning countries to groupings; great disparities existed between the rates paid by countries in the different groupings; and there were inequities in the assignment of countries in similar circumstances to different groupings. Consequently, his delegation hoped that in the future work of the High-level Open-ended Working Group on the Financial Situation of the United Nations, all Member States would commit themselves to addressing the long-overdue comprehensive review of the scale of assessments for peace-keeping operations.

11. Ms. ALMAO (New Zealand) said that her delegation had supported the draft resolution, which went some way towards redressing the structural imbalance inherent in earlier General Assembly decisions. However, the problem addressed by the draft resolution was not exclusive to Belarus; a number of other Member States were also being heavily penalized by the existing system for the apportionment of peace-keeping expenses. Her delegation believed that the General Assembly should address the concerns of all Member States which were affected by the anomalies of the current system and which were being assessed at rates that did not accurately reflect their capacity to pay. Her delegation was committed to reaching an equitable solution to the problems of such States, problems which in themselves were contributing to the deteriorating financial situation of the United Nations. The most appropriate forum in which to seek such a solution was the High-level Open-ended Working Group on the Financial Situation of the United Nations.

COMPLETION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

12. After the customary exchange of courtesies, the CHAIRMAN declared that the Fifth Committee had completed its work for the forty-ninth session.

The meeting rose at 5.20 p.m.